

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8338

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 13507

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: GOI COMPLAINT ABOUT JETH MALANI ASYLUM AND ANANDA MARG
ACTIVITIES

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY TEJA CALLED IN ADCM
SEPTEMBER 13 TO EXPRESS MEA CONCERN OVER GRANTING
OF POLITICAL ASYLUM TO JETH MALANI. TEJA SAID
GOI REGRETTED THAT USG HAD NOT CONSULTED IN ADVANCE
WITH INDIAN GOVERNMENT ON JETH MALANI'S APPLICATION.
INDIANS DID NOT CONSIDER THAT HE WAS A POLITICAL
REFUGEE AND FELT THAT HAD HE WANTED TO STAY
IN THE US HE COULD HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO DO SO IN
SOME OTHER STATUS. TEJA SAID THAT JETH MALANI WAS
A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE WHO HAD MADE SLANDEROUS
STATEMENTS ABOUT INDIA WHEN HE WAS IN THE UNITED
STATES. THE GOI CONSIDERED THAT THE MANNER AND
METHOD BY WHICH HE WAS GRANTED ASYLUM WAS "UNUSUAL"
AND WOULD BE REGRETTED. TEJA EXPRESSED THE HOPE
THAT JETH MALANI WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO ABUSE HIS
STATUS OR TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD
"ADVERSELY AFFECT US-INDO RELATIONS."

2. TEJA THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE GOI HAD BEEN
INFORMED THAT THE ANANDA MARG MOVEMENT IN THE US
WAS MAKING EFFORTS TO CONTACT CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND TO
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BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE POPE THE HANDLING OF THE

ANANDA MARGIS IN INDIA AS AN EXAMPLE OF DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA. TEJA EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT SOMETHING MIGHT BE DONE ABOUT THIS BY THE USG.

3. ON THE FRASER COMMITTEE HEARINGS TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 16, TEJA AGAIN CALLED THIS A "REGRETTABLE DEVELOPMENT" AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAD ANY INFLUENCE ON THE COMMITTEE, IT MIGHT PERSUADE FRASER TO HOLD HEARINGS WHICH WOULD BE TOTALLY "COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IN TERMS OF US-INDIA RELATIONS."

4. ADCM TOLD TEJA THAT IT HAD BEEN JETH MALANI'S DECISION TO APPLY FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM AND HAVING DONE SO HIS APPLICATION HAD TO BE CONSIDERED ON ITS MERITS. IN VIEW OF THE WARRANT UNDER MISA FOR HIS ARREST, AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE MISA WAS APPLIED, USG AUTHORITIES HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ACCEPT HIS CLAIM TO BE A POLITICAL REFUGEE. ON ANANDA MARG, ADCM EMPHASIZED THAT SO LONG AS THAT ORGANIZATION IN THE US WAS NOT IN VIOLATION OF US LAWS, THERE WAS LITTLE WHICH THE USG COULD DO TO PREVENT ITS LOBBYING WITH WHOMEVER IT WISHED. SIMILARLY, ADCM OBSERVED THAT THE FRASER COMMITTEE ON THIS OCCASION, AS IN AUGUST, HAD MERELY INFORMED THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ITS INTENTION TO HOLD HEARINGS AND THAT THERE WAS RELATIVELY LITTLE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION COULD DO, AS GOI WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY AWARE, TO DIRECTLY INFLUENCE OR CONTROL SUCH HEARINGS.

5. COMMENT: TEJA'S MANNER IN RAISING THESE ISSUES WAS MILD, PRECEDED BY RATHER GENERAL, LIGHT HEARTED BANTERING. WHILE TEJA WOULD CERTAINLY INSIST ON THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE GOI EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET, TEJA'S PRESENTATION MUST BE CONSIDERED AS "LOLKESE" UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
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